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ABSTRACT

Designed for braille transcribers and teachers of the visually handicapped, this document presents two articles about textbook braille. The first article presents information on the various methods available for transcribing tables--the stairstep method, the keying method, and the linear method. The second article provides further discussion of the linear method for transcribing data tables. (LH)

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TEXTBOOK FORMAT BRAILLE

Tables — what else!

Margaret Craig, Chairman

As the new skills chairman, let me tell you that "I love tables". Why? Perhaps it's like the reply of a little boy who was asked why he was hitting himself on the head with a hammer — "Because it feels so good when I stop". The feeling of satisfaction upon completion of any format is great. At CNIB we receive a large variety of books to braille and are constantly faced with new problems. So my interests are not really confined to tables but encompass the many challenges of textbook braille.

When confronted by an illustration, graph or chart in a text, the first thought is "Do I or don't I". If, upon reading the text, you find that the information contained in the illustration, graph or chart is not presented in the text, then another question arises: "Is the information contained therein a necessary part of the text and should it be transcribed?". This decision is usually made after an overall view of the book. However, it is a decision that has to be made.

When dealing with tables these questions do not arise. The table must be transcribed. Each table has its own peculiarities so each one must be dealt with individually. Readability is most important. Keep the reader in mind and strive for simplicity of presentation. It is a great advantage to have feedback from a reader.

There are various methods available for transcribing tables. See Rule XVII,§40. Do not confuse these rules for tables with Rule XVII,§39 which applies to columned material. However, we can borrow from Rule XVII,§39.

In order to transcribe a table more satisfactorily space-wise the columns and rows may be transposed. See Rule XVII,§39.e.

Also, if it is impossible to maintain a line-by-line relationship of material across a page see Rule XVII,§39.f. This is called the "stairstep" method. It is very important that each stairstep follow the spacing and punctuation of material as stated in the transcriber's note. The suggested transcriber's note in the example following the rule could be shortened to read, "Print column form changed as follows:", thus saving two braille lines should you need them.

The keying method, Rule XVII,§40.d, is a super space saver. Yes, you can use #10, #11, etc., if your key runs over nine items. Use letter combinations if they will identify the heading more readily. An example is vb for Vitamin B. This is recognizable and is preferable to using, e.g., #3. To take this point further, if you are confronted with Vitamin B6 or Vitamin B12, use an identifiable combination such as b#6 and b#12. This is an exception to the rule but will certainly receive plaudits from the reader If the material you are keying does not lend itself to two-letter combinations and you are using numbers already in the key, use a, b, c, etc., each followed by a period. Do not use letters preceded by the letter sign.

The linear method, Rule XVII,§40.c, should be avoided. Do not employ this format for columns of figures. If columns are totalled this method is disastrous.

Do you have any braille format problems? Or do you have any interesting formats that you would like discussed in this column or that would be suitable for workshop material? I look forward to your mail. You'll find my address near the back of this *Bulletin*.

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TEXTBOOK FORMAT BRAILLE

The Linear Format

Margaret Craig, Chairman

This column is about the linear method, Rule XVII, 40.c.

My comment in the Fall *Bulletin* has come back to haunt me and I must qualify my remark, "The linear method should be avoided. . . ."

This method is ideally suited to the example presented below.

If the following statement appears in a textbook, its reason for being there should be established and then the format chosen. If it is necessary to keep as close to the print form as possible because of the context, then the column form must be retained.

However, the example here is from a financial statement for general reading and not necessarily for the purpose of teaching.

The print indention is followed. Main entries are brailled in cell 1 with runovers in cell 5 and subentries are brailled in cell 3 with runovers in cell 7.

Totals without narrative are brailled: main total in cell 1 (line 25) and substotals in cell 3 (lines 16 and 24).

The left-hand material is brailled ending with a colon and the figures are separated by a semicolon.

Note the braille dash in line 13.

The dollar signs have been omitted and no transcriber's note is necessary as the wording, "(All figures are in $1,000's)" is sufficient.

This format has been well received by many braille readers.

NALADO CORPORATION, INC.

BALANCE SHEET

MARCH 31, 1983

(with comparative figures as at March 31, 1982)

(All figures are in $1,000's)

ASSETS

	1983	1982
CURRENT		
Cash and short term deposits	$ 4,458	$ —
Accounts receivable	34,481	11,080
Provincial tax credits receivable	34,540	77,053
Petroleum incentive credits receivable	19,876	23,893
Due from affiliate	371,101	204,523
	464,456	316,549
INVESTMENT IN AND ADVANCES TO SUBSIDIARY	(46)	(315)
FIXED		
Producing oil and gas properties including well development expenditures less accumulated depletion of $6,829 (1982 - Nil)	114,282	35,964
Production and other equipment less accumulated depreciation of $765 (1962 - $462)	6,432	4,165
Non producing properties	491,272	1,041,106
	611,986	1,081,235
	$1,076,396	$1,397,469